

# Public Involvement and Comments Received on the Draft EIS (cont.)

(from page 1) in Folsom, California, and December 12, 2002 in Marysville, California. The purpose of the public hearings was to take public comments.

Comments on the Draft EIS were made at the public hearings and were also sent directly to Western via mail, telephone, and e-mail. A total of 117 comments were received from 28 individuals, companies, and government agencies. The categories of comments were as follows:

- ◆ Air Quality
- ◆ Alternatives
- ◆ Biological and Wetland Resources
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Environmental Impact Statement Process

- ◆ Electric and Magnetic Fields
- ◆ Figures
- ◆ Funding
- ◆ Geology
- ◆ Health and Safety
- ◆ Land Use
- ◆ Permitting
- ◆ Power Transmission
- ◆ Remarks
- ◆ Socioeconomics
- ◆ Soils
- ◆ Visual Resources

Western responded to comments in the Final EIS by providing clarifications, corrections, and developing modified alternatives as described by Option B of the Proposed Action and Alternative 2.

## Notice of Availability and What's Next

The Notice of Availability for the Final EIS is scheduled to be published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the *Federal Register* in September 2003. The Record of Decision will be published in the *Federal Register* no sooner than 30-days after the notice announcing the availability of the Final EIS. Western will send a letter notifying the individuals listed on the mailing list when project funding is available.



### Contact Information:

- ◆ **Toll-free hotline:** 1-877-913-4440
- ◆ **Visit the website:** [www.wapa.gov/SN](http://www.wapa.gov/SN)
- ◆ **E-mail us at:** [mcmahon@wapa.gov](mailto:mcmahon@wapa.gov)  
Please include: "SVS Comments" in subject line

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# Sacramento Area Voltage Support EIS News

A periodic publication of Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Nevada Region—Issue 5, September 2003

## The Project Manager's Corner

Western Area Power Administration (Western) is pleased to announce the completion of the Sacramento Area Voltage Support (SVS) Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It will be ready for distribution in mid September 2003. Be sure to fill in the document request coupon included in this newsletter if you would like to obtain a copy.

Western received comments from public agencies, utility districts, and interested parties during the Draft EIS review period. As a result of this input, Western added an alternative option that includes realignment modification for the Proposed Action and Alternative 2. The Proposed Action and Alternative 2, as identified in the Draft EIS, have been relabeled as "Proposed Action Option A" and "Alternative 2 Option A" in the Final EIS. The modified alternatives are correspondingly labeled "Proposed Action Option B" and "Alternative 2 Option B." The differences between Option A and B are described in the Alternative Overview section of this newsletter and depicted on the enclosed figures.

This SVS EIS News lists the types of comments received on the Draft EIS and discusses the next step in the process. I again encourage you to complete the mail-in coupon insert of this SVS EIS News to request an electronic or hard copy of the Final EIS. I would also be happy to meet with you to discuss the EIS process or the contents of the document.

Cordially,

Loreen McMahon  
Environmental Project Manager  
Sacramento Area Voltage Support EIS  
Western Area Power Administration  
Sierra Nevada Region

## Public Involvement and Comments Received on the Draft EIS



Public involvement is a vital part of the decision-making process for the EIS. Western developed a public involvement program to provide multiple opportunities for comment during the SVS EIS process, which included public scoping, alternative formulation, alternative evaluation, and decision-making. The program was intended to guide Western through a collaborative, systematic, decision-making process with four primary purposes:

- ◆ Share information with the interested public
- ◆ Gather information from the public
- ◆ Identify public concerns and issues
- ◆ Develop and maintain credibility

As part of the public participation process, a 45-day comment period was provided following publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIS on November 15, 2002. During this public comment period, we held three public hearings: December 9, 2002 in Lodi, California, December 11, 2002 (continued on page 4)

## Request for the Final EIS



Due to heightened security, the Final EIS will not be available on our SVS Website. You may order an electronic or hard copy of the Final EIS by completing the mail-in coupon that is part of this newsletter or requesting it through the website or Hotline. Copies will only be mailed to those requesting a copy. Each copy of the Final EIS will be accompanied by a CD copy of the Draft EIS.

Call toll-free 1-877-913-4440 for more information about the SVS Final EIS, or visit us at: [www.wapa.gov/SN](http://www.wapa.gov/SN).

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## SVS Final EIS Overview

Western's Central Valley Project transmission system is an integral part of the transmission grid in northern California. Western operates and maintains its system according to Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) reliability standards. Growth in the greater Sacramento area and power imported from generation outside the region have increased demand on the interconnected electric transmission system, leading to transmission system overloads and a reduction in power system reliability and security. Western prepared the Sacramento Area Voltage Support (SVS) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to comply with Federal laws, regulations, and guidelines, principally the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Western's SVS EIS consists of the Draft EIS (Western 2002) and the Final EIS. The two documents are intended to be reviewed together. In whole, the EIS contains a description of the existing environment for the project study area, analysis, and findings of environmental impacts for the Proposed Action and alternatives. A Record of Decision (ROD) will be published no sooner than 30 days from the publication date of the Final EIS.

The results of public scoping meetings, workshops, meetings with agencies, and earlier studies by Western and interested area utility groups helped to develop a range of alternatives that were analyzed in the Draft EIS. Three types of project activities would be conducted under the Proposed Action and alternatives:

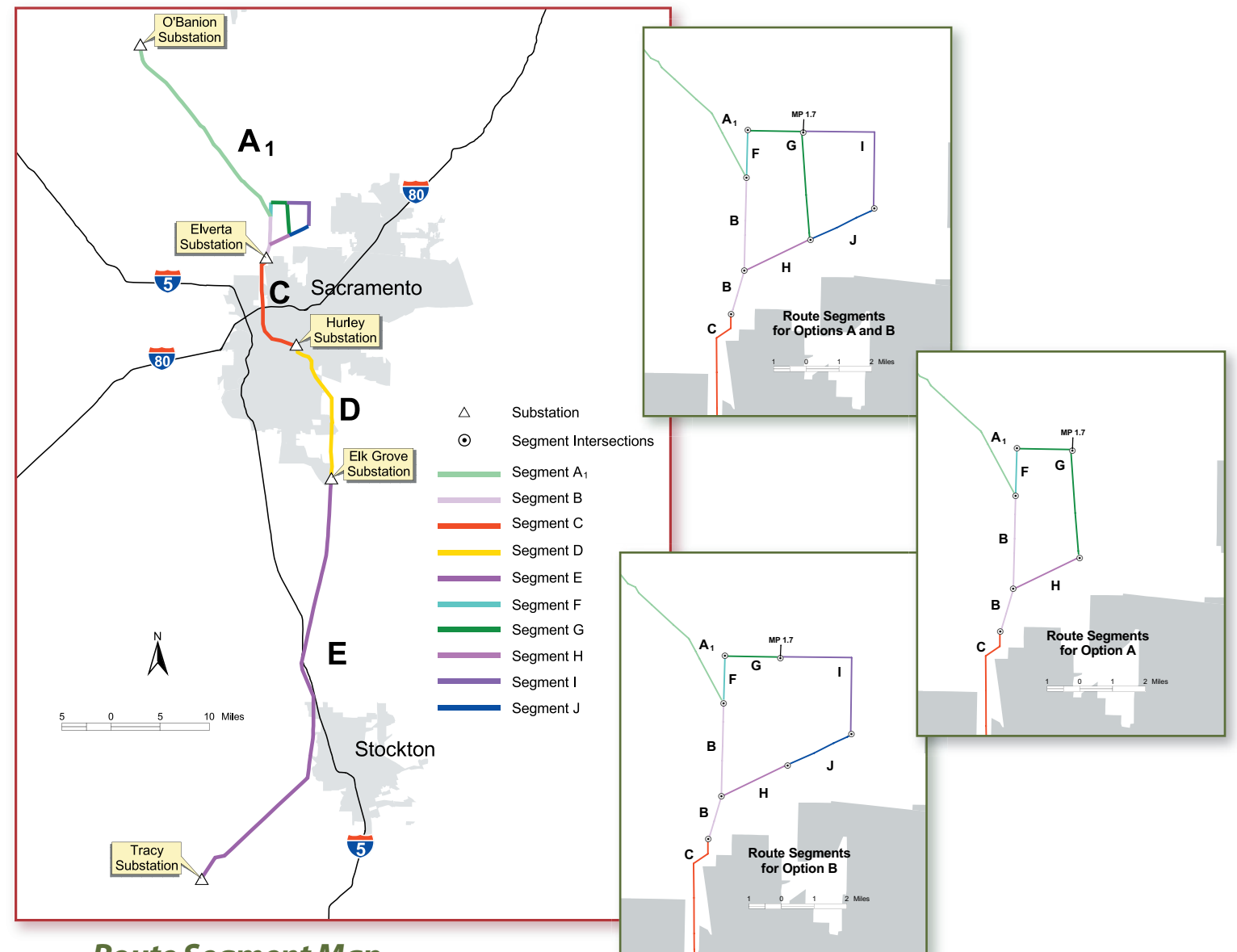
- ◆ **Reconductoring** would consist of replacing the existing transmission line conductors (wires) with higher capacity conductors. In general, the existing rights-of-way (ROW) would be used, and some new structures may be needed.
- ◆ **New construction** of transmission lines would include designing and building new structures and installing new conductors. New construction would occur on existing ROW, where possible, or require acquisition of new ROW in parallel with existing ROW.
- ◆ **Realignment** would include route deviations from Western's existing transmission lines at two locations. The first realignment would avoid encroachment of the Pleasant Grove Cemetery, and the second realignment would avoid residential areas.

The Draft EIS analyzed the Proposed Action, three action alternatives, and the "no action" alternative. The Final EIS:

- ◆ Identifies the Preferred Alternative,
- ◆ Provides corrections to the Draft EIS,
- ◆ Identifies additional information not included in the Draft EIS,
- ◆ Presents public comments on the Draft EIS, and our response to those comments, and
- ◆ Describes the realignment modification for the Proposed Action and Alternative 2.

Based on comments on the Draft EIS, Western added an option that includes realignment modification for the Proposed Action and Alternative 2. The Draft EIS Proposed Action and Alternative 2 have been relabeled as "Proposed Action Option A" and "Alternative 2 Option A." The modified alternatives are labeled "Proposed Action Option B" and "Alternative 2 Option B." The addition of the two modified alternatives (see figures on page 3), increases the project alternatives to seven. Project activities associated with each of the seven alternatives are described below, including the differences between Option A and B.

- ◆ **Proposed Action Option A** is the original alignment of the Proposed Action. It would consist of: (1) reconductoring a double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from Elverta Substation to Tracy Substation; (2) constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation; and (3) realigning the transmission line near Pleasant Grove Cemetery, between the O'Banion Substation and Elverta Substation and Option A of the Cottonwood–Roseville single-circuit, 230-kV transmission line.
- ◆ **Proposed Action Option B** modifies the alignment of the Proposed Action. It would consist of (1) reconductoring a double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from Elverta Substation to Tracy Substation; (2) constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation; and (3) realigning the transmission line near Pleasant Grove Cemetery, between the O'Banion Substation and Elverta Substation and Option B of the Cottonwood–Roseville single-circuit, 230-kV transmission line. This modified realignment of the Cottonwood–Roseville line would extend about 2 miles east of the original alignment then, traverse south.
- ◆ **Alternative 1—Reconductoring O'Banion Substation to Tracy Substation** would consist



Route Segment Map

of reconductoring the existing single-circuit and double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Tracy Substation.

- ◆ **Alternative 2 Option A—New Transmission - O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation** is the original alignment of Alternative 2. It would consist of constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation and realigning the transmission line near Pleasant Grove Cemetery and Option A of the Cottonwood–Roseville single-circuit, 230-kV transmission line.
- ◆ **Alternative 2 Option B—New Transmission - O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation** includes the modified alignment of Alternative 2. It would consist of constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation and realigning the transmission line near Pleasant Grove Cemetery and

**Option B** of the Cottonwood–Roseville single-circuit, 230-kV transmission line. This modified realignment of the Cottonwood–Roseville line would extend about 2 miles east of the original alignment then traverses south.

- ◆ **Alternative 3—New Transmission - Elk Grove Substation to Tracy Substation** would consist of constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from Elk Grove Substation to Tracy Substation.
- ◆ **No Action Alternative** under the No Action Alternative, existing transmission line system operation would continue unchanged. Western would not develop or build additional transmission lines or substation facilities in the study area relative to voltage support.